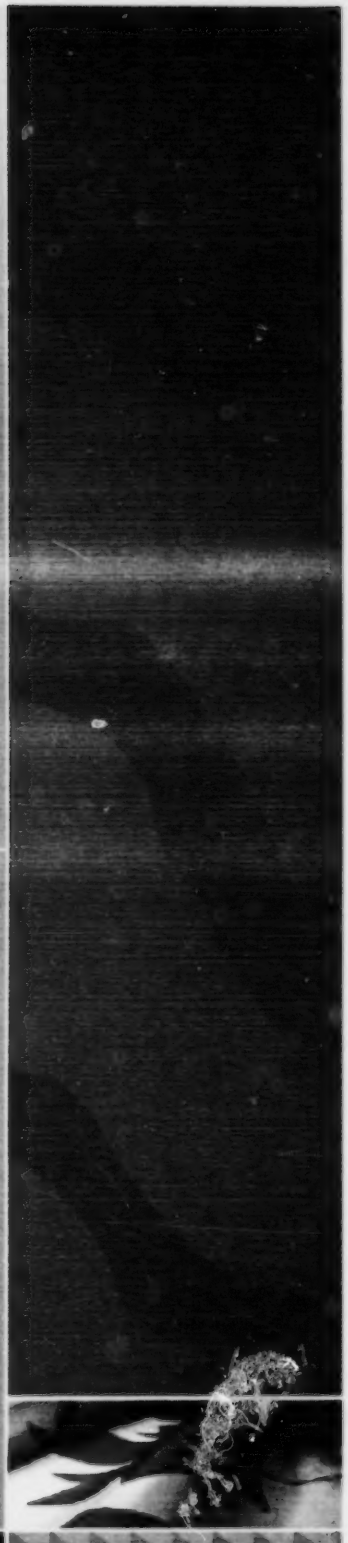
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada

The Landscape

Public Opinion on Aboriginal and Northern Issues



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Introduction

On April 19th 2004, Prime Minister Paul Martin brought together over 40 members of the Federal Cabinet, Senate and House of Commons in a roundtable discussion with 70 Aboriginal leaders from across the country. This Aboriginal Peoples Roundtable was considered to be an important first step in strengthening ties between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Canada. From this meeting, several key priorities directly affecting Aboriginal people were outlined: achieving results, economic development, education, health and housing.

Given that this landmark meeting has initiated a new dialogue between the federal government and Aboriginal people in Canada, public opinion research, with its capacity to enable all members of society to communicate their thoughts and opinions, is positioned to become an area of increasing importance. In order to fully understand the complex issues that exist between Canadians and Aboriginal people in both the North and South of Canada, the views of many diverse groups must be taken into consideration.

This compendium of public opinion research findings is designed to give a broad perspective on current views regarding Aboriginal and Northern issues. This resource takes into consideration the views and perspectives of diverse groups including the general population, Northern residents, youth and First Nations people living both on- and off-reserve.

The information in this summary will be updated in future editions. For more information, please contact us by e-mail at **landscape@inac-ainc.gc.ca**.

Executive Summary

This report on public opinion summarizes views regarding Aboriginal issues. It reports on the views and perspectives of diverse audiences including the general public, those living in the North, youth and Aboriginal people living on- and off-reserve in Canada.

Demographic Overview

- As of 2002, there were 976,305 people in Canada who identified themselves as Aboriginal. Of these, 286,080 (29%) lived on-reserve while 690,225 (71%) lived off-reserve.
- Between 1971 and 2001, the Aboriginal population in Canada increased by 322%, partly as a result of Bill C-31. Conversely, Canada's non-Aboriginal population increased by only 37%.
- The Aboriginal population has a much higher proportion of youth (under age 24) than the general population of Canada.

General Findings

- While Canadians believe Aboriginal issues are important, they do not consider them to be critical public policy issues at this point in time (as compared to health care for example).
- 41% of Canadians think that the Government of Canada is doing a good job of handling Aboriginal issues. Residents of the North are even more positive, with 50% approving of federal performance. First Nations people living on-reserve are slightly more likely (36%) than those living off-reserve (29%) to say that the government is doing a good job.
- When asked to identify the most serious issue facing Aboriginal people in Canada, Canadians cite alcohol and drugs (24%) most frequently. A slightly lower percentage of Canadians (17% each) say that standard of living issues (including housing, poverty, living conditions) and racism and discrimination are the most pressing issues.

Quality of Life

- Approximately two-thirds of Canadians think that the overall standard of living of Aboriginal people is inferior to that of the average Canadian. Perhaps surprisingly, only 46% of Aboriginal people on-reserve believe that the standard of living of Aboriginal people is worse than that of other Canadians.
- Northerners are more likely than Canadians living south of 60° to believe that the quality of life in their community is worse than that of other Canadians.
- Six in ten Canadians report that they are sympathetic to Aboriginal concerns – a level that has remained fairly stable over time. Sympathy is greatest among residents of British Columbia, Ontario, Yukon and the Northwest Territories, while residents of Quebec display the lowest levels of sympathy.

Health Care

- Aboriginal people, both on- and off-reserve, consider health care to be the most important issue facing Canada. Not surprisingly then, Aboriginal people living on- or off-reserve believe that health care should be the Government of Canada's top priority. As such, their views correspond with those of other Canadians.
- Views among Canadians living in the North are different. Unemployment (12%) and the economy (11%) are the two top issues for Canadians living north of the 60th parallel, with only 7% citing heath care as the most important issue.

Education

- When Canadians are asked to rate the importance of issues affecting Aboriginal youth on which the government should focus, education (40%) ranks as the top issue.
- Nearly one-half of Canadians think that the quality of on-reserve education is poor compared with the education received by the general population.
- Similarly, Aboriginal youth believe that the quality of education provided by on-reserve schools is inferior to that of "city schools". Aboriginal youth, in a series of focus groups, offered a common assessment of the lag between the two systems – two years.
- When presented with a series of measures that might help to increase high school graduation rates among Aboriginal youth, 49% of Canadians believe that improving social, education and health programs for Aboriginal youth should be the top priority.
- More than one-half (58%) of Aboriginal people living off-reserve say that retaining their Aboriginal language is important to them, with another 29% saying that it is at least somewhat important. A high percentage of Northerners (40%) report that they are "very concerned" with the potential loss of Aboriginal languages and culture.

Economic Development

- Northerners and Canadians living south of 60° both place a high priority on improving the quality of life in Aboriginal communities. One of the ways to accomplish this would be through "more economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people", an approach characterised as "very important" by 47% of Southerners and 60% of Northerners.
- Other approaches designed to improve economic development and quality of life also receive public support e.g. skills development and educational assistance.
- Northerners are optimistic about the impact of a natural gas pipeline on their territory, with 78% believing that the impact of a pipeline will be positive. Northerners are relatively certain that the economic benefits of a pipeline will outweigh any potential environmental damage.

Land Claims, Treaties and Self-Government

- Canadians consider land claims to be the fourth most serious issue facing Aboriginal Canadians, behind alcohol/drugs, discrimination and standard of living. Large majorities in both the North and South consider the settlement of Aboriginal and Inuit land claims to be an important issue.
- Having said this, Canadians appear fatigued with the land claims issue. Only about one in five Canadians agrees that land claim settlements lead to improved social and economic conditions for Aboriginal people.
- With regard to treaties, 37% of Canadians believe that historical treaties are "sacred promises that cannot be altered but can be interpreted in a modern context". A larger segment of the public (47%) believes that historical treaties are "agreements that need to be updated from time to time". Finally, 14% of the public believe that historical treaties are "sacred promises that cannot be altered or reinterpreted in any way".
- Canadians offer lukewarm support for Aboriginal self-government. Only one in five citizens believes that Aboriginal people have a historic, existing right to self-government. Still, a sizable percentage (47%) believes that self-government leads to an improvement in the standard of living of Aboriginal people.

Communications Issues

- According to a survey conducted in 2004, 55% of Northerners had contacted the Government of Canada in the previous three month period for service or information. In 2003, Aboriginal people living off-reserve reported somewhat lower levels of contact, with 37% reporting that they had contacted the government during a previous three month period. This compares to 41% of Aboriginal people living on-reserve who had contacted the government during the same time-frame.
- The telephone remains the primary method of contact for people dealing with the Government of Canada, with electronic methods (Internet and e-mail) growing in use. In general, the quality of information and service received from the government is rated as good.

Demographic Overview

On-reserve Population by Region

- By region, the number of Registered Indians living on a reserve in 2002 ranged from a low of 3,911 in Yukon to a high of 80,216 in Ontario.
- The largest on-reserve regional gains between 1992 and 2002 were in Alberta and Manitoba.

Off-reserve Population by Region

- The on-reserve population increased steadily between 1982 and 2002 from 96,538 to 301,514.
- The number of Registered Indians who live off-reserve has increased in all regions. The largest off-reserve regional gain south of 60° between 1992 and 2002 was in Manitoba.
- Conversely, the off-reserve population of Quebec exhibited the lowest rate of increase over the same period.

Population Distribution by Age and Gender

- The Registered Indian population has a higher proportion of youth (under age 24) than the population of Canada as a whole.
- The proportion of population over age 40 years is markedly lower among Registered Indians than across Canada.

Demographic Explosion

- 1971-2001: Aboriginal population increased 322%; Canadian population increased 37%.
- The demographic explosion of the registered Indian population is in part (35%) due to Bill C-31, where status was restored to First Nations women who had previously lost status through marrying non-First Nations men. The demographic increase of other Aboriginal groups cannot be explained by Bill C-31.

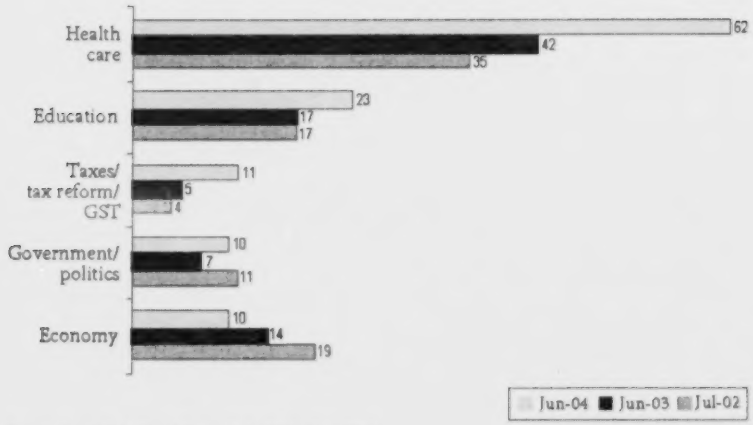
The Results

Section One – Where do we stand?

Section One – Where do we stand?

A – Most Important Issue

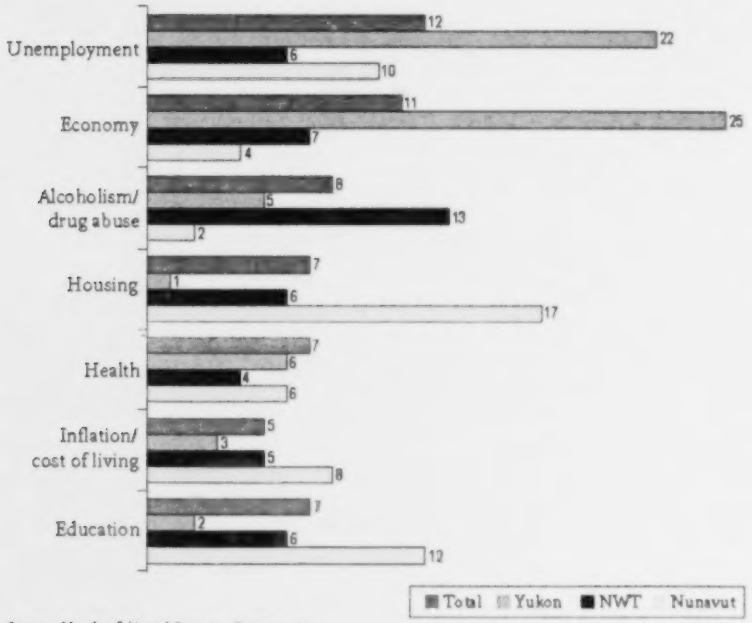
Top of mind government priorities



Source: Ipsos-Reid Trend Report July 2002 – June 2004

- Canadians were asked to think about the issues facing them and indicate which one should receive the greatest attention from Canada's leaders. In this open-ended question, health care remains the most important issue among Canadians and in fact, has gained in importance between 2002 and 2004.
- Aboriginal issues do not figure on Canadians' list of priorities; in June 2004, only one percent of Canadians see this as a priority.

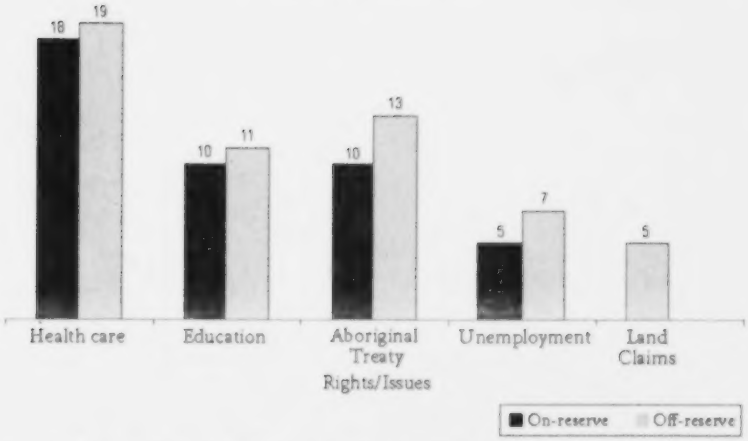
Most important issue facing the North (by Territory)



Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- Views among Canadians living in the North are quite different from those in the rest of Canada. Unemployment (12%) and the economy (11%) are the two top of mind issues for those Canadians living North of the 60th parallel, with only seven percent citing heath care as the most important issue.
- Although health care is the over-riding concern for Canadians south of 60° it does not have the same significance for Northerners, but it does register as a concern in all Territories.
- Views on the most important issue facing the North vary widely by Territory. Residents of Yukon are most concerned with issues concerning the economy and unemployment and are less concerned with the more social issues that concern the other Territories.
- Residents in Nunavut are primarily concerned with housing and education, while those in the Northwest Territories are focused on alcoholism and drug abuse.

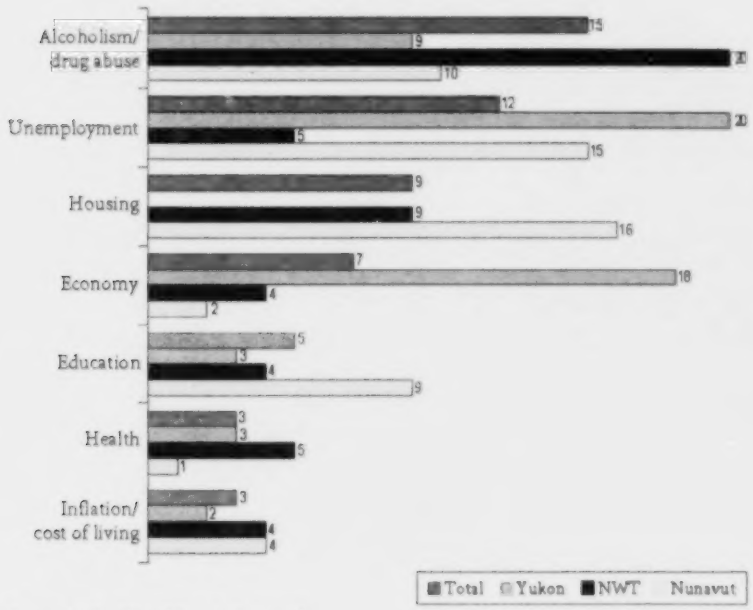
Most Important Issue for Government – on- and off-reserve



Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Spring 2004, Ekos
Source: Survey of Aboriginal People Living Off-Reserve, 2003, Ekos

- When asked to consider what the most important priority for the new federal government should be, First Nations people living on-reserve see health care (18%), education (10%), and Aboriginal treaty rights (10%) as the foremost issues of importance.
- The views of First Nations people living on-reserve regarding health care and education are virtually identical to those found among Aboriginal people living off-reserve. Aboriginal treaty rights and issues are somewhat more important to the off-reserve population than to First Nations people on-reserve (13% versus 10% of those on-reserve), whereas land claims are not seen as an important issue for federal government focus by those living off-reserve.

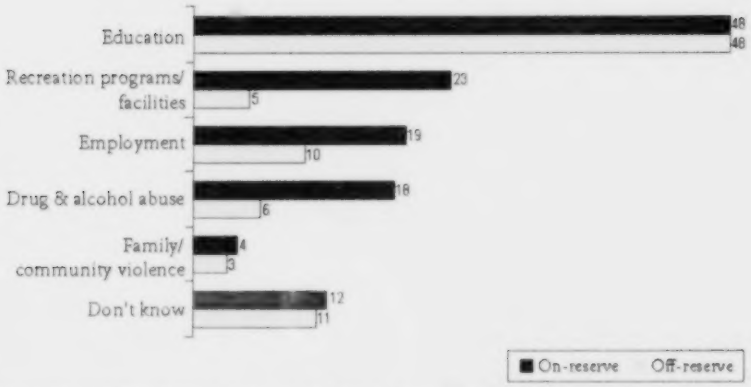
Most important issue – community (by Territory)



Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- In an effort to determine what Northern residents feel are the immediate priorities in their lives, Northern Canadians were asked to identify the most important issue facing their community. Alcoholism and drug abuse (15%) were mentioned as the most important local issue, followed closely by unemployment (12%).
- Although health care is the dominant priority issue for southern Canadians, only three percent of Northerners see this as a concern at the local level.

Government priorities for Aboriginal young people living on- and off-reserve

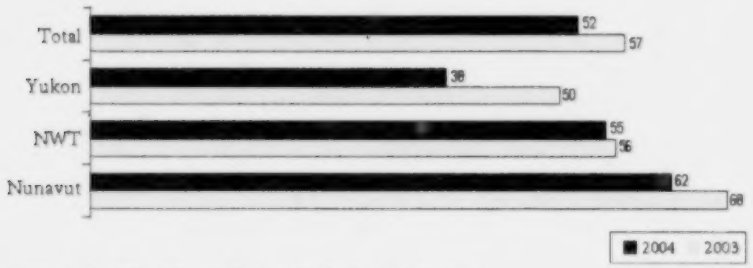


Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Spring 2004, Ekos
Source: Survey of Aboriginal People Living Off-Reserve, 2003, Ekos

- First Nations people living on- and off-reserve are equally likely (48%) to see education as the main priority issue for Aboriginal youth today.
- Recreation programs/facilities and drug/alcohol abuse are both seen as significantly higher priorities for Aboriginal youth by those who live on-reserve than by those who live off-reserve.

B – Performance of the Federal Government

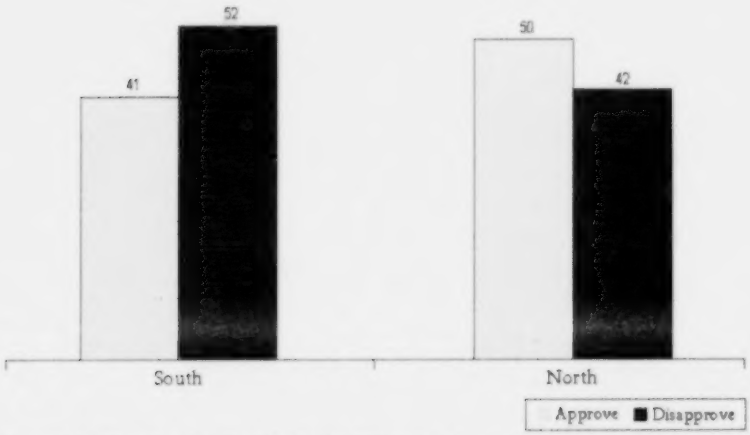
Federal government satisfaction in the North (total satisfied)



Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- Regarding the views of Canadians living in the North, we find that over one-half of Northern residents (52%, down five points since 2003) are satisfied with the present federal government in Ottawa. It is important to note that only nine percent say that they are very satisfied.
- Satisfaction with the present federal government in the North decreases with age and is noticeably higher among Aboriginal Northerners (58%) than among non-Aboriginal Northerners (47%).
- Satisfaction with the performance of the federal government has dropped across all three territories since last year, most substantially in the Yukon (50% down to 38%).

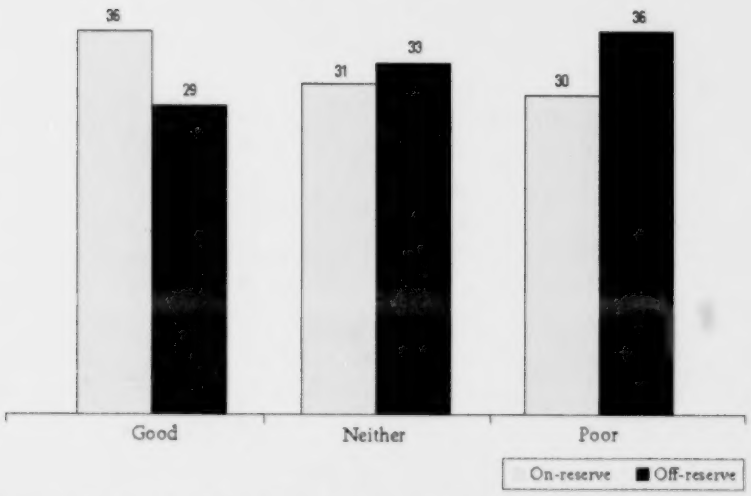
Federal government performance on Aboriginal issues



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2004, Ipsos-Reid
Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- Four in ten Canadians (41%) think that the federal government is doing a good job of handling Aboriginal issues. Interestingly, residents of the North are even more approving of the performance of the federal government regarding Aboriginal issues, with one-half (50%) saying that they approve.
- Aboriginal Northerners (50%) are in agreement with non-Aboriginal Northerners (50%), with both groups saying that they approve of the federal government's handling of Aboriginal issues.

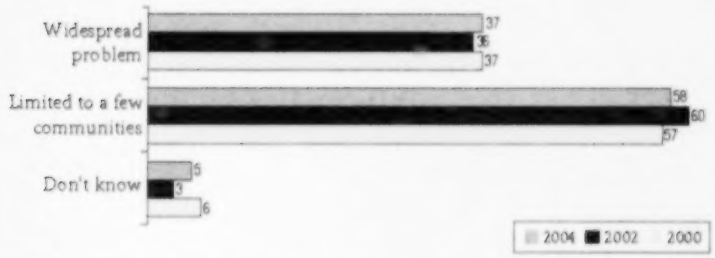
Overall performance of the Government of Canada – on- and off-reserve



Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Spring 2004, Ekos
Source: Survey of Aboriginal People Living Off-Reserve, 2003, Ekos

- First Nations people living on-reserve are slightly more likely (36%) than those who live off-reserve (29%) to say that the government is doing a good job. Those living off-reserve are more likely to say that the government is doing a poor job (36%) than those living on-reserve (30%).

Perceptions regarding alleged improper use of federal government funds by Aboriginal communities



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2000-2004, Ipsos-Reid

- Perceptions regarding the scale of alleged improper use of government funds by Aboriginal communities have remained virtually unchanged since 2000.
- Currently, a majority of Canadians (58%) believe that the alleged improper use of federal government money is not widespread but limited to a few communities.
- Men (41%) are more likely than women (34%) to perceive the misuse of federal government funding by Aboriginal communities as a widespread problem.
- However, there are some key regional differences of note. Residents of Saskatchewan/ Manitoba (53%) are significantly more likely than Canadians overall (37%) to believe that this is a widespread problem. Residents of Quebec are least likely to think that this is a widespread problem (30%).

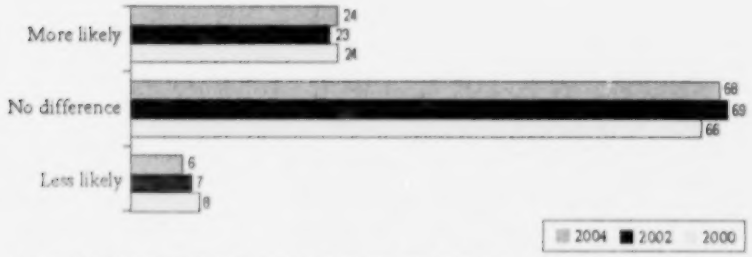
Perceived reasons for improper use of federal government money

Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2000-2004, Ipsos-Reid

- Canadians are becoming more inclined to believe that improper use of federal government money is a result of willful negligence on the part of Aboriginal communities and organizations. Currently, more than one-half of Canadians (53%) believe that willful negligence is the primary reason for the improper use of funds. The number that hold this view has risen by nine points in four years.

- Residents of Saskatchewan/Manitoba (64%) are once more much more likely than Canadians overall (53%) to believe that improper use of funds is due to willful negligence. Ontarians (48%) are least likely to hold this view.

Likelihood of occurring in Aboriginal communities versus other communities

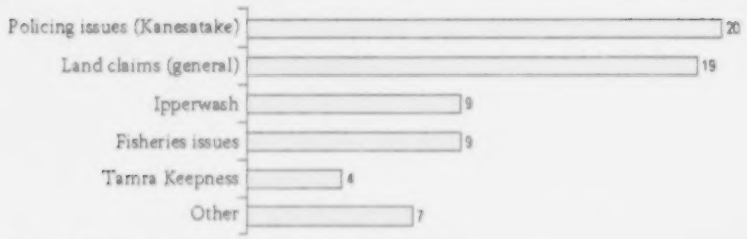


Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2000-2004, Ipsos-Reid

- On a positive note, Canadians do not feel that Aboriginal communities are more susceptible to misuse of public funds than other communities.
- A large majority of Canadians (68%) does not see this as a problem that is specific to Aboriginal communities. One quarter of Canadians (24%) do, however, feel that it is more likely that improper use of government money will occur in Aboriginal communities.

C – Awareness of Aboriginal Issues

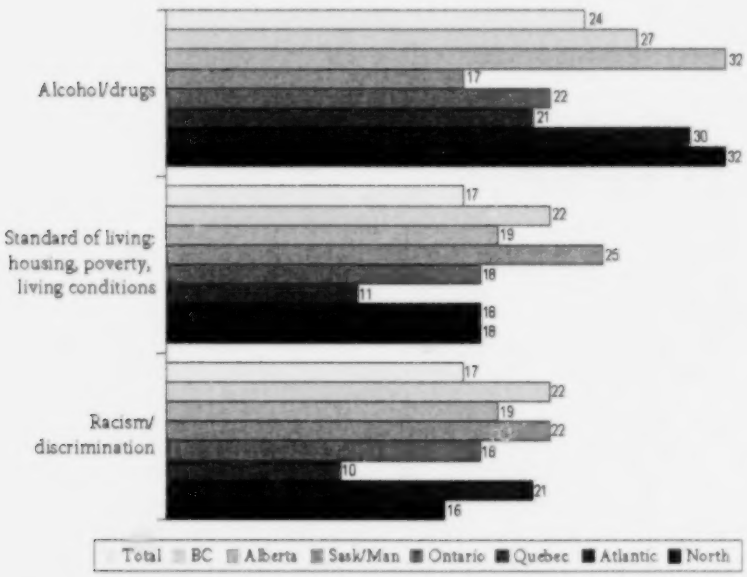
Media recall – Aboriginal issues



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2004, Ipsos-Reid

- Media awareness of Aboriginal issues among Canadians is relatively high, with six in ten (60%) saying that they remember hearing about or seeing an Aboriginal issue in the news recently.
- Among those who recall having seen an Aboriginal issue in the news, policing issues (including Kanesatake) is the number one news item (20%). Nearly equal numbers recall issues regarding land claims (19%), while nine percent each recall fisheries issues and issues regarding Ipperwash.

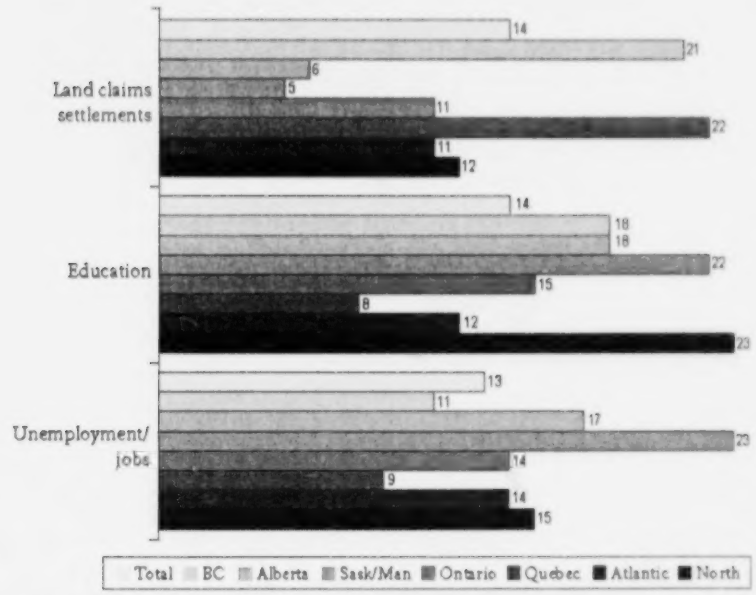
Most serious issue or problem facing Aboriginal people – first tier



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2004, Ipsos-Reid

- When asked about the most serious issue or problem facing Aboriginal people in Canada, Canadians see alcohol and drugs (24%) as the number one issue. A slightly smaller number of Canadians (17% each) say that standard of living issues (including housing, poverty and living conditions) and racism and discrimination are the most pressing issues.
- Alcohol and drugs are viewed as a more pressing concern among Albertans and Northern Canadians while racism and discrimination are seen as a higher concern for those living in British Columbia and in Saskatchewan/Manitoba. Residents of Saskatchewan/Manitoba are also more likely to say that standard of living issues are the most serious problem or issue facing Aboriginal peoples.

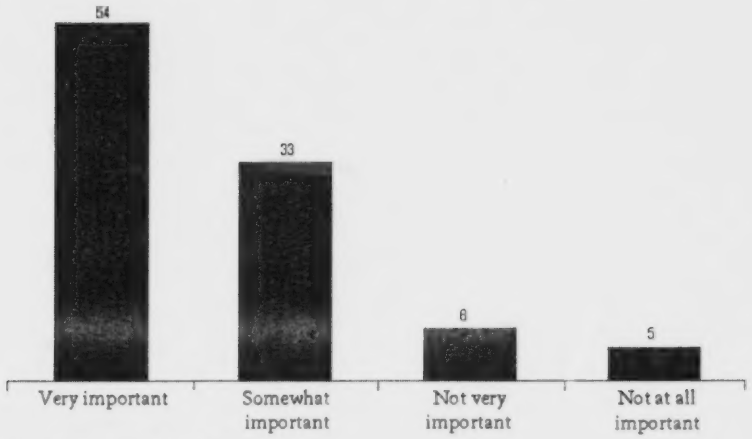
Most serious issue or problem facing Aboriginal people – second tier



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2004, Ipsos-Reid

- A slightly smaller number of Canadians cite land claims settlements (14%), education (14%) and unemployment/jobs (13%) as the most serious problem facing Aboriginal people.
- Land claims settlements are seen as a higher priority by residents of British Columbia and Quebec, while education is seen as a more serious problem by those living in Saskatchewan/Manitoba and the North.
- Unemployment and jobs are perceived as a more serious problem by those living in Saskatchewan/Manitoba.

Importance of preserving Aboriginal cultural traditions



Source: Focus Canada 2004-2, Environics

- When asked to consider the importance of preserving Aboriginal values, traditions and languages, a large majority of the general public (87%) feels that preserving these traditions is important. Even more striking is the fact that more than one-half of Canadians (54%) feel that preserving these values, cultures and traditions is very important.
- Women (90% total, 58% very important) are more likely than men (84% total, 50% very important) to see the preservation of Aboriginal traditions and languages as important.
- Residents of Ontario (61%) are much more likely than average (54%) to feel that this is a very important issue. Those living in the Prairies (49%) are least likely to see this issue as very important.

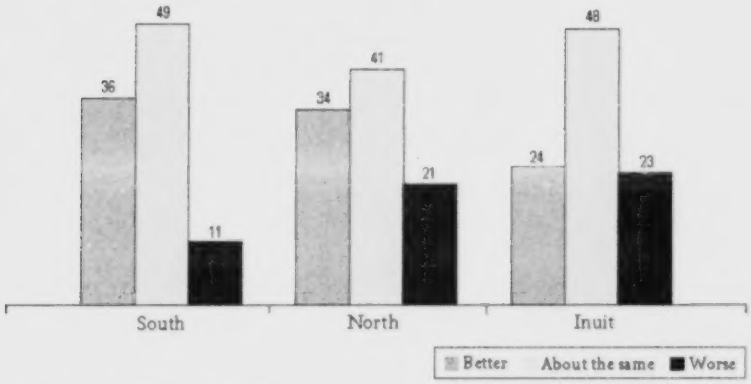
The Results

Section Two – Quality of Life

Section Two – Quality of Life

A – Quality of Life and Standard of Living

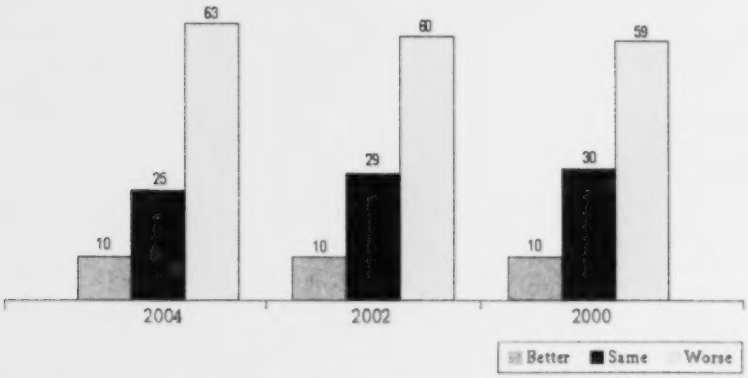
Quality of life in your community versus other communities in Canada



Source: Focus Canada 2004-2, Environics
Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- Northerners are significantly more likely than Canadians south of 60° to believe that the quality of life in their community is worse than that of other Canadians (21%, versus 11% in the South).
- Inuit, similar to Southeners, are more likely to view the quality of life in their community as the same, in comparison to other Northerners.
- Residents of British Columbia are most likely to say that their quality of life is better, while those living in the Yukon are the most likely among northern residents to say that their quality of life is better than that of other Canadians.
- Those living in the Atlantic provinces (18%) are most likely among regions in the South to believe their quality of life is worse, while residents in Nunavut and Nunavik are equally likely (31% each) to believe their quality of life is worse.

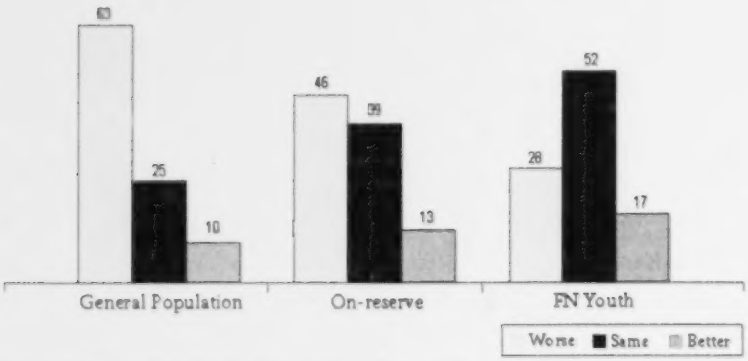
Aboriginal vs. average Canadian standard of living



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2000, 2002, 2004, Ipsos-Reid

- Canadians have a negative view when considering the standard of living of Aboriginal people. More than six in ten Canadians (63%) think the overall standard of living among Aboriginal people is worse than the average Canadian's.
- Those saying that the standard of living is worse has seen a small but constant increase since 2000. However, those saying that the standard of living is the same has seen a slight but steady decrease since 2000.

Standard of living of First Nations people vs. other Canadians



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2004, Ipsos-Reid
Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Spring 2004, Nov. 2003, Ekos

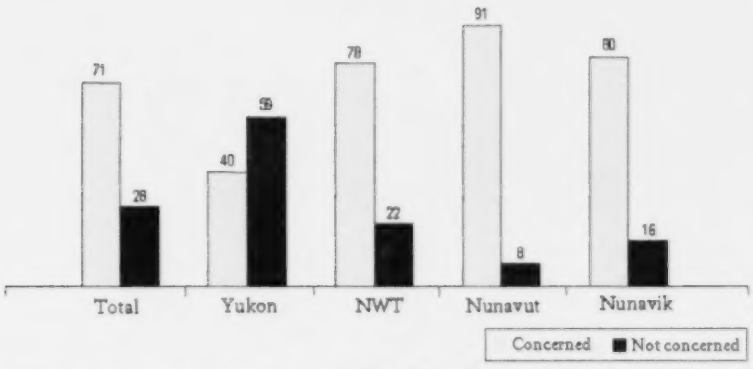
- First Nations people share the general public's fairly pessimistic view of the standard of living of Aboriginal people, but to a lesser degree. Currently, half of First Nations people on-reserve (46%) believe that the overall standard of living of First Nations people is worse than other Canadians.

- First Nations youth are, however, more optimistic than adults, with just over half of youth believing that the standard of living of First Nations people is the same as that of other Canadians, and just over one-quarter (28%) believing that it is worse.

B – Housing for Northerners and First Nations People

Housing is an important issue for Canadians and is particularly important for First Nations people given that it directly affects such crucial priority issues as quality of life and standard of living. Housing is especially important in the current climate since, according to statistical data, Canada's Aboriginal population has experienced rapid growth in recent years. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada will be compiling more opinions and views on this issue in future installments of this publication.

Concern over the availability of housing

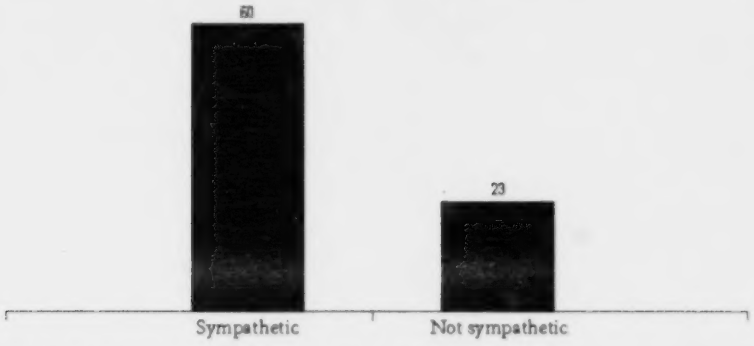


Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- When we ask Northerners about the availability of housing, we find that concern is very high, although housing does not rank highly as a top-of-mind issue. Seven in ten (71%) overall say that they are concerned with the availability of housing with 46 percent saying that they are very concerned.
- The number of Nunavut residents who believe the availability of housing (91%) is an issue of concern for their community is alarmingly high. The issue is seen as much less of a concern by those living in Yukon (40%).
- The differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Northerners on this issue are striking, with 83 percent of Aboriginal Northerners seeing housing as a concern compared with 56 percent of non-Aboriginal Northerners.

C – Relations Between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal People

Degree of sympathy for Aboriginal concerns



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2004, Ipsos-Reid

- Sympathy for Aboriginal concerns is greatest among residents of the Northwest Territories, Yukon, Ontario and British Columbia; also among older Canadians and those with a university education.

In order to get to the heart of an issue, it is often helpful to bring together diverse parties in an effort to hear opinions in greater depth. To this end, focus groups were conducted to determine what the general public and First Nations people think about the current state of relations between First Nations and non-First Nations people.[1]

General Public Views on Relations Between First Nations and Other Canadians

- When asked to characterize relations between First Nations and other Canadians, general public focus group participants offer a wide range of opinions. In Victoria and Yellowknife, many of those in the general public rate inter-personal relations between First Nations and other Canadians as good, while in Sault Ste Marie, Québec City and Halifax, few offer favourable impressions of relations between First Nations and non-First Nations people.
- Some of the main issues among those in the general public are that First Nations people are dwelling on issues that happened in the past, that have little to do with the present situation, or that there needs to be increased accountability in terms of how money is allocated to First Nations.

[1] Ipsos-Reid: Strategic Corporate Communication Review, August 2003

First Nations Views on Relations Between First Nations and Non-First Nations People

- First Nations people view the situation much differently. Many consider relations to be somewhat strained, believing that non-First Nations people are often misinformed and prejudiced about First Nations issues. First Nations participants believe that many non-First Nations people hold racial stereotypes regarding members of First Nations.
- Having said this, some First Nations people believe that things are improving gradually, and point to examples of increased co-operation between both groups as proof that relations are getting better.

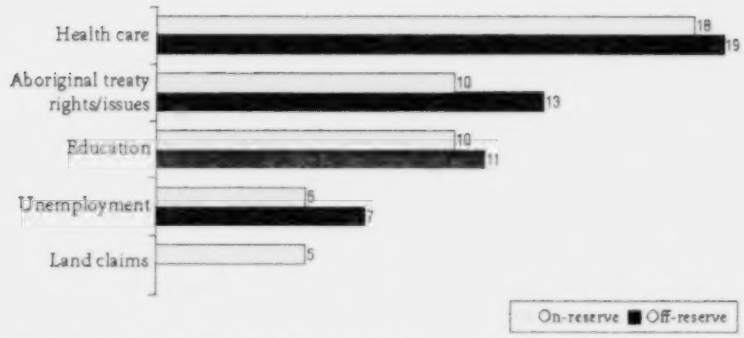
The Results

Section Three – Health Care

Section Three – Health Care

A – How is the Government Doing?

Priority issues for Government of Canada – on- and off-reserve

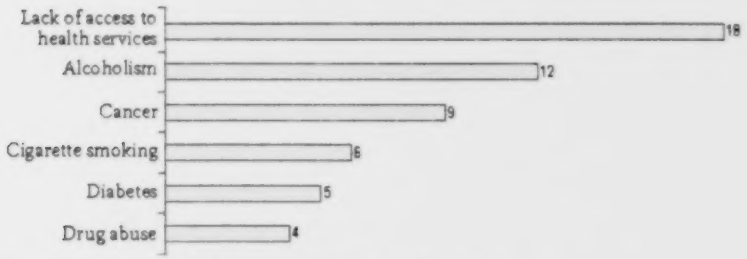


Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Spring 2004, Ekos
Source: Survey of Aboriginal People Living Off-Reserve, 2003, Ekos

- Looking at the results among First Nations people living on-reserve, health care is clearly seen as the top issue that the Government of Canada should focus on. Health care is considered to be the most important issue for the federal government, according to 18 percent of First Nations people living on-reserve.
- Currently, 19 percent of Aboriginal people living off-reserve believe that health care should be the top priority.

B – Access to Health Care

Most important health issue facing the community – North

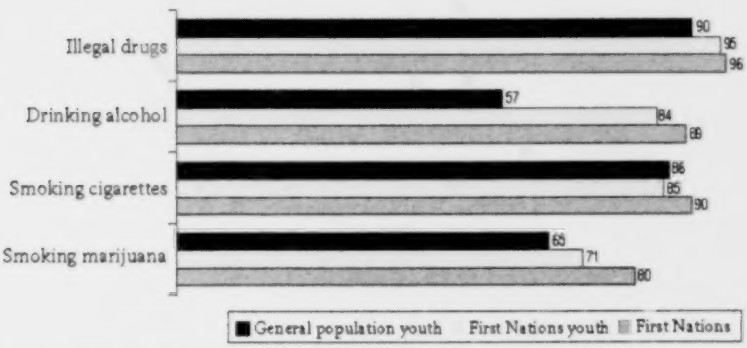


Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- Northerners see lack of access to health services (18%) as the most important health issue facing their communities. However, there is a gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal opinion on this point. Twenty-five percent of non-Aboriginal Northerners identify lack of access to health services as the most important health issue, but only 12 percent of Aboriginal people in the North do so.

C – First Nations Health Issues

Perception of substances as dangerous* – First Nations vs. general population



Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Spring 2004, Ekos
Source: Health Canada Youth Survey, GPC Research, Sept. 2003

* "dangerous" and "very dangerous" combined

- The abuse of drugs and alcohol is one of the key problems facing First Nations communities today. To help get an overall picture of perceptions of the danger of drugs and alcohol, four issue areas were tested with First Nations people, First Nations youth and youth from the general population.

- While there was consensus among each group on the dangers of illegal drugs and cigarettes in general, there was less consensus on the dangers of alcohol and marijuana. Youth overall were less likely than adults, to see alcohol, cigarettes or marijuana as "dangerous".
- Youth in the general population were less likely than First Nations youth or First Nations people in general to see alcohol and marijuana as "dangerous".

Definition of fetal alcohol syndrome – First Nations

Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve – Dec. 2002, Ekos

- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is another issue affecting First Nations communities. When asked, 96 percent of those under 40 years of age were aware of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. Interestingly, 15 percent of those who said that they were aware of FAS could not define FAS, which suggests that they simply had name recognition of this syndrome.
- Among those who provide a definition of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, nearly six in ten (59%) respond that, in a general sense, it affects the unborn fetus. Thirty six percent further specify that this syndrome is harmful to the baby.

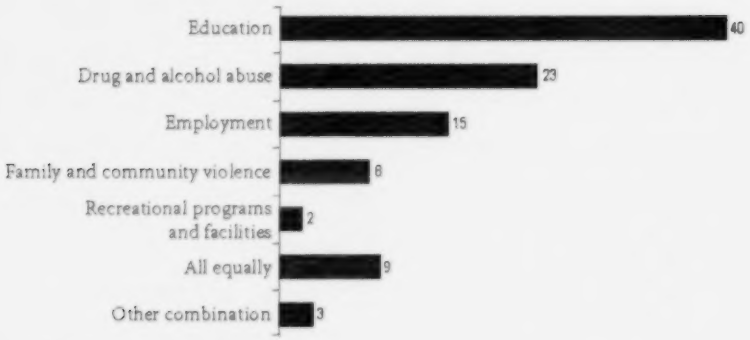
The Results

Section Four – Education

Section Four – Education

A – Public Views on Aboriginal Education

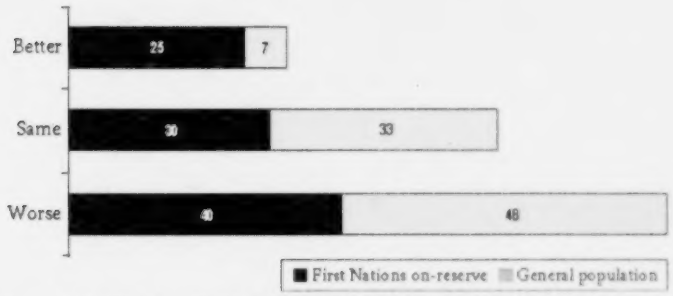
Priority of issues facing Aboriginal youth



Source: Focus Canada 2004-2, Environics

- Education (40%) is clearly seen as the top issue affecting Aboriginal youth that needs the government's attention. In fact, education is ranked higher than both drug and alcohol abuse and employment, which are both commonly thought to be major factors affecting Aboriginal youth.
- Education is seen as the most important issue affecting Aboriginal youth across all regions, although the issue is seen as slightly more important by those living in British Columbia (45%). Drug and alcohol abuse, on the other hand, is seen as a higher priority item by residents of Saskatchewan (30%) and Alberta (31%) when compared to the national average (23%).

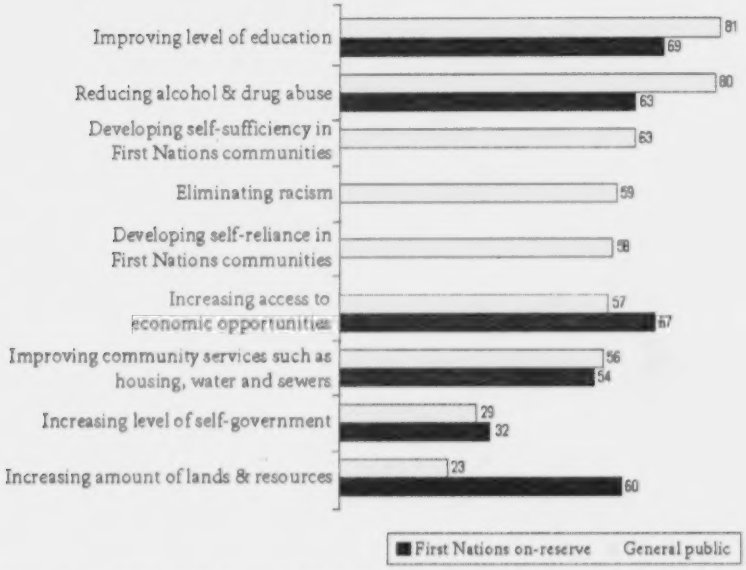
Quality of on reserve education versus that received by other Canadians



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2004, Ipsos-Reid
Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve – Dec. 2002, Ekos

- Given that education is seen as a high priority item for the government when addressing the issues that affect Aboriginal youth, Canadians were asked to rate the overall quality of on-reserve education.
- Nearly one-half of Canadians (48%) currently think that the quality of on-reserve education received by First Nations children and youth is worse compared with the education received by the general public as a whole. One third (33%) hold the belief that on-reserve education is the same as that received by other Canadians.
- Only seven percent think that First Nations children and youth receive higher quality education compared with the education received by other Canadians.

Factors to improve the standard of living on reserve: First Nations vs. general public*



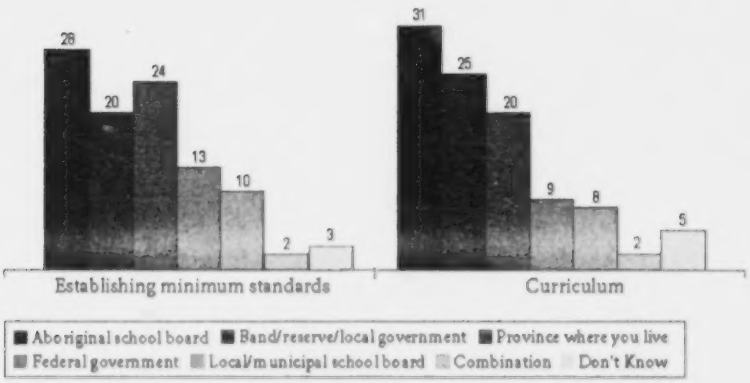
Source: Survey of FN People On-Reserve, Fall 2001, Ekos
Source: Rethinking Government, Wave II, August 2004, Ekos

*Those saying that the standard of living of Aboriginal people is "worse" than that of other Canadians

- Not only is education seen as the key factor when Canadians consider the situation of Aboriginal youth, it is also seen as having a direct link to the standard of living in First Nations communities.
- Currently, a large majority (81%) of Canadians see improving the level of education of First Nations people as having a major impact on improving the standard of living on-reserve.
- Across all demographic groups, Canadians see improving the level of education as, to a large extent, improving the standard of living on-reserve.

B – First Nations Views on Aboriginal Education

Educational responsibilities: establishing minimum standards and curriculum



Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Spring 2004, Ekos

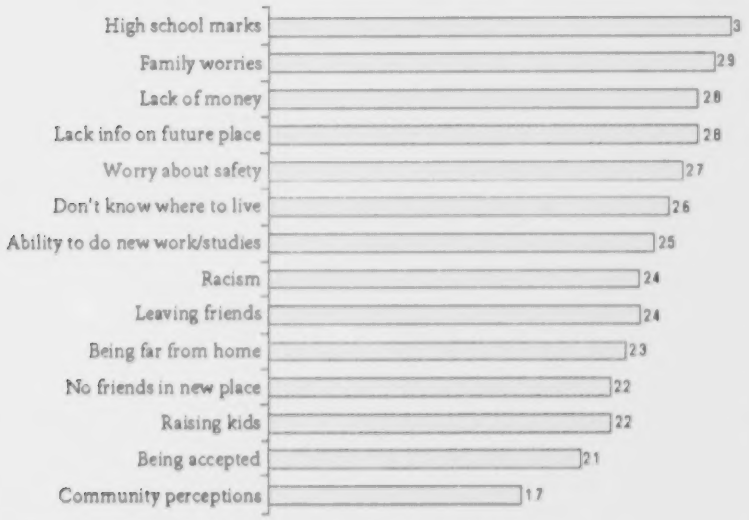
- When asked to think about organizations that should play a central role in First Nations schools, people living on-reserve believe that Aboriginal school boards should be in charge of both determining the curriculum and establishing minimum standards of education in the classroom. One in three (31%) said Aboriginal school boards should decide what is to be taught and how, and 28 percent said they should be in charge of determining minimum standards in the schools.
- As for determining minimum standards, the province is the second choice (favoured by 24% of reserve residents), followed by Band/reserve/local government (20%).

To determine what First Nations youth think about the quality of their on-reserve education, a total of eight focus groups were conducted with First Nations' youth living in First Nations communities. Most participants had spent at least one or two years attending school on-reserve, with many having completed both their primary schooling and junior high (i.e., up to grade nine) on-reserve.

- Everyone agreed that the quality of education provided by reserve schools is inferior to that of "city schools" (i.e., public or Catholic schools located off-reserve). Remarkably, participants across the groups provided a common unprompted assessment that the degree of lag was two years.
- According to participants, it is not just that the curriculum of reserve schools is "slow", but that the quality of teaching is also said to be inconsistent and the demands and expectations that teachers place on students is low.

Some of the key barriers to success outlined in these focus groups were drug and alcohol abuse, inferior quality of reserve school education, culture shock/racism/stereotyping and lack of parental involvement. To add a further level of depth to research on these issues, a survey was undertaken in Saskatchewan with First Nations high school students.

Barriers to life choices

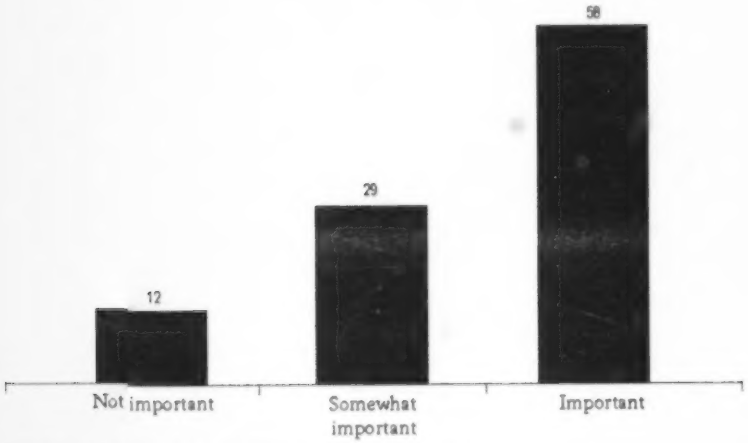


Source: Future choices, Future directions – First Nations High School Survey, Saskatchewan 2004, Western Opinion Research

- A number of possible barriers to success were proposed to students. To better represent the statistical data, means were calculated for each of the response options. All means were calculated out of a possible 5.0.
- Saskatchewan respondents are most concerned that their high school marks, worries about their family, a lack of money and a lack of information on their future place ("not having enough information about where I will be") might stop them from making the choices that they want to make.

C – Preserving Traditional Education and Culture

Importance of learning/retaining Aboriginal language – off-reserve Aboriginal people

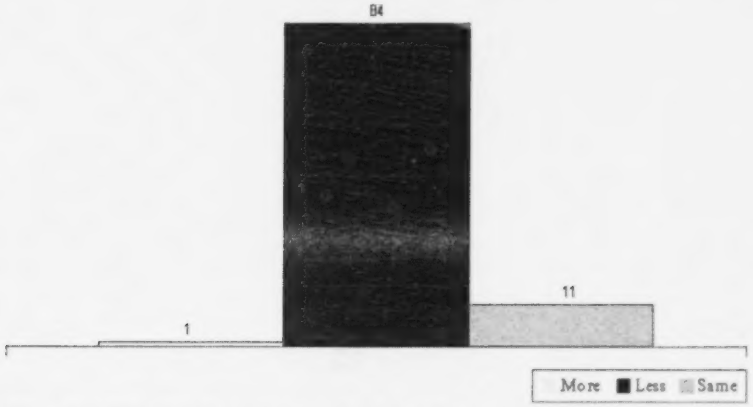


Source: Survey of Aboriginal People Living Off-Reserve, 2003, Ekos

- Aboriginal people living off-reserve were asked to rank the importance of learning and retaining their Aboriginal language. More than one-half (58%) say that retaining their Aboriginal language is important to them, while nearly three in ten (29%) say that learning and retaining their Aboriginal language is somewhat important.
- The perception that the Aboriginal language is important and needs to be retained is higher among university-educated Aboriginal people living off-reserve.

D – High School Graduation Rates Among First Nations Youth

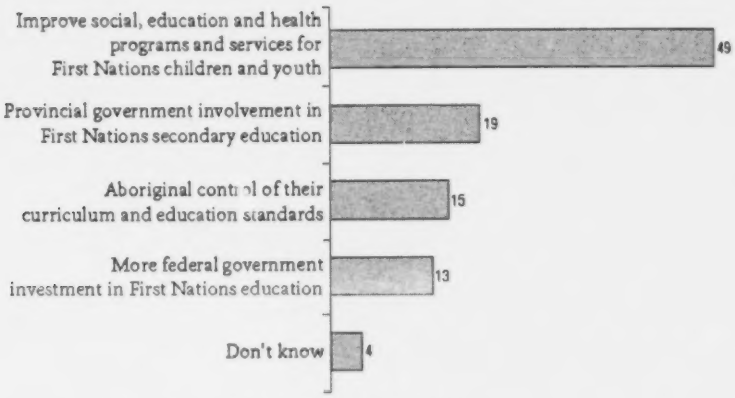
Perceptions of number of Aboriginal youth vs. Canadian youth graduating from high school



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2004, Ipsos-Reid

- In order to gauge perceptions regarding high school graduation rates among Aboriginal youth, we asked Canadians whether they thought that the number of Aboriginal youth who graduated was more, less or the same as other Canadians.
- A large majority (84%) correctly states that graduation rates among Aboriginal youth are less than those found among the population as a whole.
- The tendency to believe that graduation rates among Aboriginal youth are less than among Canadian youths as a whole increases with education and income and is highest among those who reside in British Columbia.

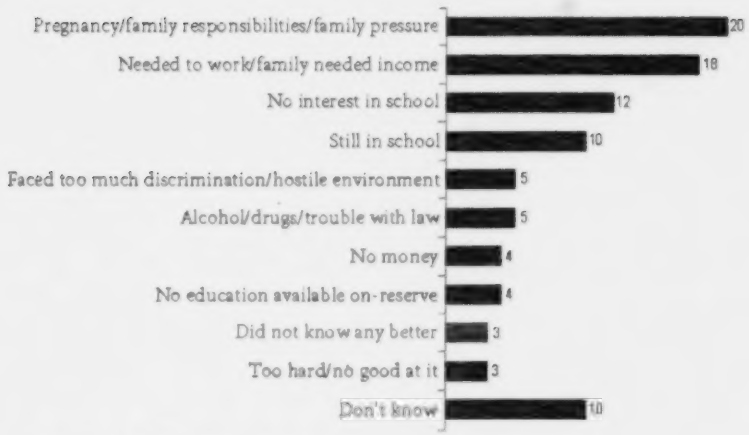
Likelihood of factors increasing high school graduation rates of Aboriginal youth to the same level as non-Aboriginal youth


Improve social, education and health programs and services for First Nations children and youth
49
Provincial government involvement in First Nations secondary education
19
Aboriginal control of their curriculum and education standards
15
More federal government investment in First Nations education
13
Don't know
4

Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2004, Ipsos-Reid

- When presented with a series of options that might increase high school graduation rates among Aboriginal youth, Canadians believe that improving social, education and health programs for First Nations youth is most likely to increase graduation rates (49%).
- Much smaller numbers believe that increased provincial government involvement (19%), giving Aboriginal people control of their education standards (15%) and more federal government investment (13%) would increase graduation rates.
- Atlantic Canadians (54%) are more likely than those in other regions to say that improving social, education and health programs would increase graduation rates among Aboriginal youth.

Reasons for not completing high school



Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Spring 2004, Ekos

- Among First Nations people who did not graduate from high school, pregnancy/ family responsibility is the most common explanation given (20%), followed closely by needing to work/have an income (18%). At least one in ten First Nations residents also say that they do not have a high school diploma because they have no interest in school (12%) or that they are still in school (10%).
- Perhaps not surprisingly, women (33% compared to 9% of men) and parents (23% compared to 8% of non-parents) are most likely to say that they did not finish high school due to pregnancy/family responsibilities.
- Residents from Quebec are more likely than those from other regions to say that they did not complete high school because they needed to work/bring in an income.

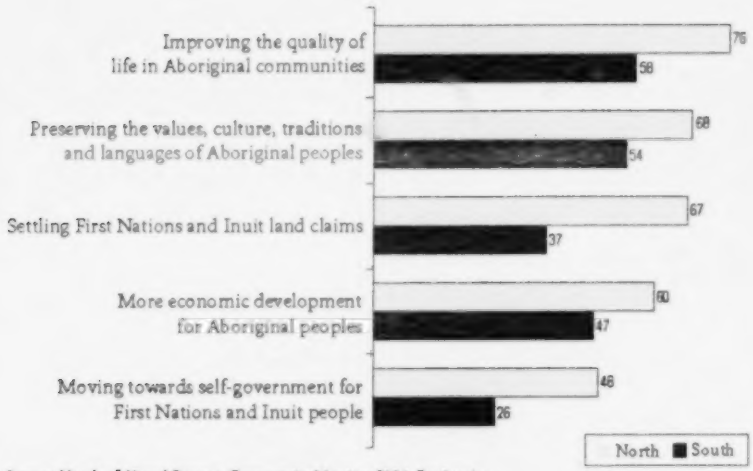
The Results

Section Five – Economic Development

Section Five – Economic Development

A – Views on Economic Development

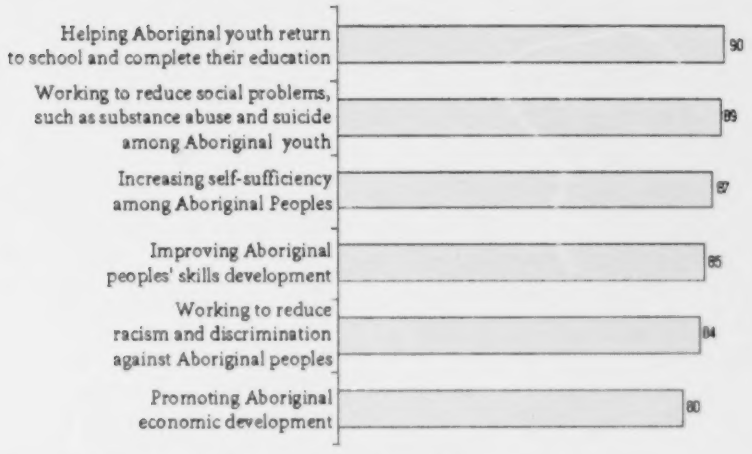
Issues facing Aboriginal people in Canada (very important)



Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics
Source: Focus Canada 2004-2, Environics

- When it comes to the issues facing Aboriginal peoples in Canada, Northerners and Southerners both place a high priority on improving the quality of life in Aboriginal communities followed by preserving the values, culture, traditions and language of Aboriginal peoples.
- The issue of economic development currently places fourth on the list, yet it is still thought to be a very important priority issue by a majority of Northerners (60%). Compared with residents of the North, Canadians in the rest of Canada are much less likely (47%) to see economic development as being a very important priority issue for Aboriginal peoples.
- Aboriginal Northerners are more likely than non-Aboriginal Northerners to place importance on each of these issue items. Economic development is no exception with 70 percent of Aboriginal Northerners seeing the issue as very important compared to one half (50%) of non-Aboriginal Northerners.
- Among southern Canadians, the tendency to see economic development as very important increases with age and is notably higher among residents of Ontario (55%) and those with a university education (54%).

Importance of various policies and activities concerning Aboriginal people in Canada

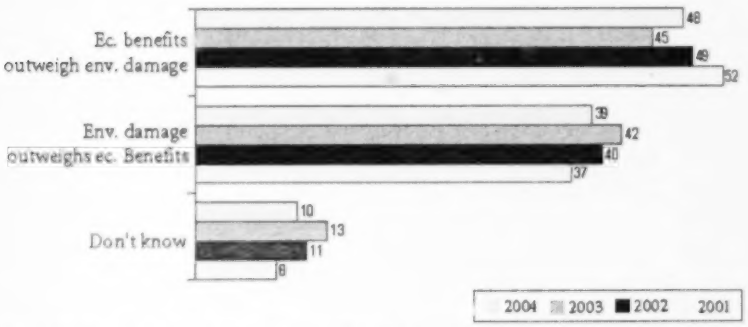

Helping Aboriginal youth return to school and complete their education
90
Working to reduce social problems, such as substance abuse and suicide among Aboriginal youth
89
Increasing self-sufficiency among Aboriginal Peoples
87
Improving Aboriginal peoples' skills development
85
Working to reduce racism and discrimination against Aboriginal peoples
84
Promoting Aboriginal economic development
80

Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2004, Ipsos-Reid

- To assess government performance on issues regarding Aboriginal peoples, a number of issues were presented to Canadians and ranked according to priority.
- Currently, a majority (80%) view promoting Aboriginal economic development as a priority for the federal and provincial governments across Canada. Only one in ten (10%) do not see this as a government priority.
- Even though a majority of Canadians see Aboriginal economic development as a high priority issue, it ranks low among all of the issues tested.

B – Impact of a Natural Gas Pipeline

Economic benefits vs. environmental damage of natural gas pipeline (2001-2004)

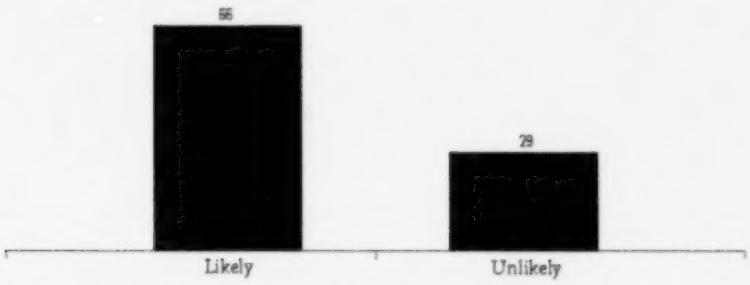


Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor, 2001-2004, Environics

- Northerners have an optimistic view of the impact of a natural gas pipeline on their territory[2]. Seventy-eight percent of Northerners overall believe that the impact of a pipeline will be positive.
- Northerners also remain generally certain that the economic benefits of a pipeline will outweigh any potential environmental damage (48%). However, agreement on this point slipped from a high of 52 percent in 2001 to 45 percent in 2003.
- Views that environmental damage would outweigh any potential economic benefit have slipped slightly from 2003 to 39 percent in 2004.[3]

[2] Only respondents in Yukon and the Northwest Territories were asked about the impact of the pipeline in 2004. (N=812)
[3] Only respondents in Yukon and the Northwest Territories were asked this question in 2004. (N=812)

Likelihood that economic benefits of gas pipeline will be shared equally between North and South



Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- When asked whether Northerners will benefit from the pipeline as much as Canadians in the south, two thirds (66%) believe it is likely that they will benefit equally. Three in ten (29%), however, believe that distribution of the benefits will not be equal between North and South.[4]
- Respondents with the highest annual household income are most likely to believe that residents in the North will benefit equally with those in the South.

[4] Only respondents in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories were asked this question. (N=812)

The Results

Section Six – Negotiations and Land Claims

Section Six – Negotiations and Land Claims

Two of the most prominent and important issues involving Aboriginal people in Canada are land claims and treaty rights. Yet, despite their high-profile status, these two concepts are often misunderstood by the public. Before looking at the opinions of Canadians regarding these issues, it is important that they be clearly defined.

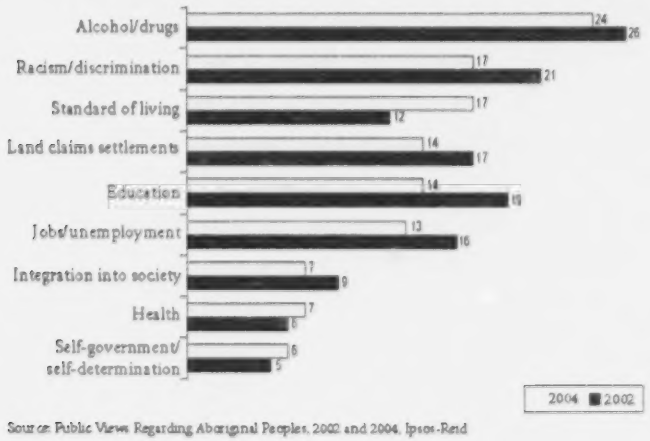
First Nations signed treaties with various British and Canadian governments before and after Confederation in 1867. No two treaties are identical, but they usually provide for certain rights, including reserve lands, annuities (a sum of money paid each year), and hunting and fishing rights.

Land claims, on the other hand, are divided into two broad classes: comprehensive and specific. Comprehensive claims are based on the recognition that there are continuing Aboriginal rights to lands and natural resources. These kinds of claims arise in those parts of Canada where Aboriginal title has not been dealt with by treaty or other legal means. Specific claims arise when there is an outstanding historical grievance between a First Nation and the Crown that relates to an unfulfilled obligation of a treaty or another agreement, or a breach of statutory responsibilities by the Crown.

A – Land Claims: Awareness

- As mentioned above, there is a high media awareness for the issue of land claims among the general public. Currently, land claims (19%) are the second highest issue mentioned when Canadians are prompted to recall an Aboriginal issue that has recently been in the news.
- This issue is second only to policing issues/Kanesatake (20%) as a top of mind Aboriginal media issue for Canadians.

Most serious issue facing Aboriginal people in Canada

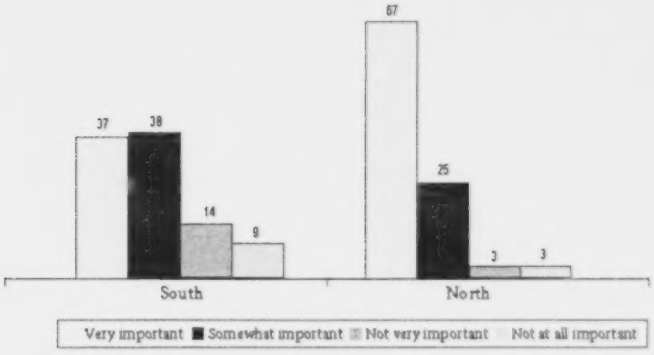


Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples, 2002 and 2004, Ipsos-Reid

- When asked an unprompted question on the single most serious issue or problem facing Aboriginal peoples in Canada today, Canadians currently place land claims settlements (14%) fourth on the list of priorities.
- Even though land claims settlements remain a relatively high top of mind priority issue, the number has dropped three points since the question was last asked in 2002.

B – Land Claims: Importance

Importance of settling First Nations and Inuit land claims

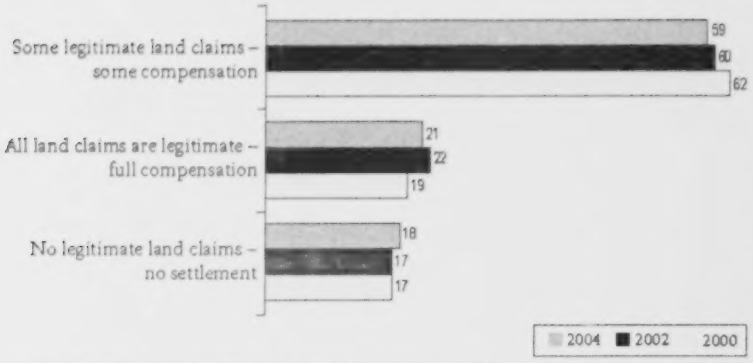


Source: Focus Canada 2004-2, Environics
Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- In terms of the overall importance of settling First Nations and Inuit land claims, we find that large majorities in both the North and South of Canada see this as an important issue.
- Two thirds of Canadians (75% total, 37% very important) see the settling of First Nations and Inuit land claims as being important. Women (80% total, 40% very important) are more likely than men (71% total, 35% very important) to see land claim settlements as being an issue of primary importance.
- Settling First Nations and Inuit land claims is, as might be expected, a much more important issue for those living in the North. Nearly all (92%) Northern residents see this as an issue of importance with 67 percent believing that it is very important.
- For Northerners, this is seen as an issue of importance by large majorities across all demographic groups.

C – Public Views on Land Claims

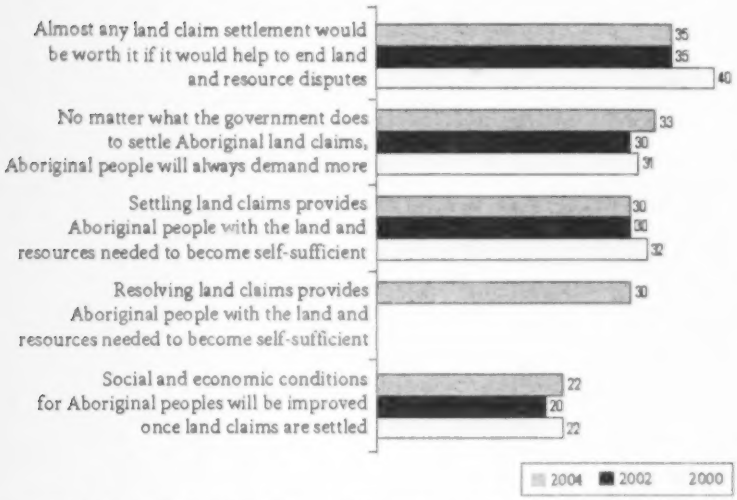
Legitimacy of land claims



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2000-2004, Ipsos-Reid

- Since 1990, Canadians have predominantly felt that Aboriginal peoples have some legitimate land claims that should be settled with some degree of compensation. Only minorities take the extreme positions, either that Aboriginal peoples' land claims are legitimate and they should be fully compensated in land, money or both, or that they have no legitimate claim to any more land in Canada and no new land claims should be made.
- Quebecers (63%) are most likely to say that some land claims are legitimate and Northerners (41%) are least likely to hold this view. Northerners (48%) are most likely to take the position that all land claims are legitimate and residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (24%) are most likely to agree no Aboriginal land claims are legitimate.

Possible impact of Aboriginal land claims*


Almost any land claim settlement would be worth it if it would help to end land and resource disputes
35
35
40
No matter what the government does to settle Aboriginal land claims, Aboriginal people will always demand more
33
30
31
Settling land claims provides Aboriginal people with the land and resources needed to become self-sufficient
30
30
32
Resolving land claims provides Aboriginal people with the land and resources needed to become self-sufficient
30
Social and economic conditions for Aboriginal peoples will be improved once land claims are settled
22
20
22
2004
2002
2000

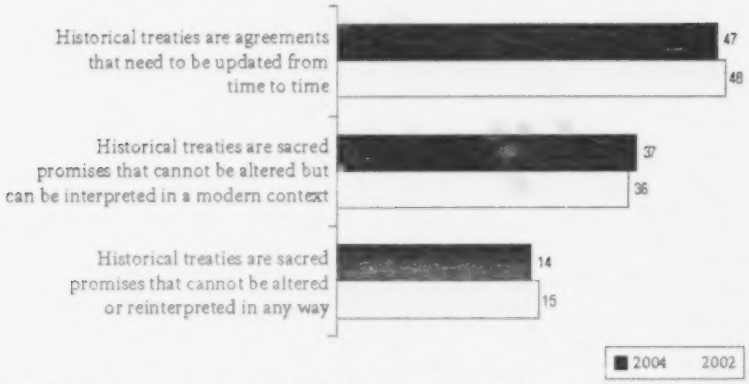
Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2000-2004, Ipsos-Reid

* Strongly agree (6,7 on 7 point scale)

- Respondents were read a list of five different positions that have been taken on the impact of settling Aboriginal land claims and asked for their agreement or disagreement to these, on a seven point scale. In general, Canadians continue to be cynical about the outcome of land and resources settlements and appear "fatigued" with the issue.
- Whether it is "settling" or "resolving" land claims, Canadians do not see this measure as one that will lead to self-sufficiency for Aboriginal peoples. Furthermore, little more than one in five agree that land claim settlements will lead to improved social and economic conditions for Aboriginal peoples.
- Only one-third of Canadians strongly agree that land claims should be settled simply to end disputes over land and resources but another one-third feel that, regardless of government efforts to settle land claims, Aboriginal people will always demand more.

D – Treaty Issues

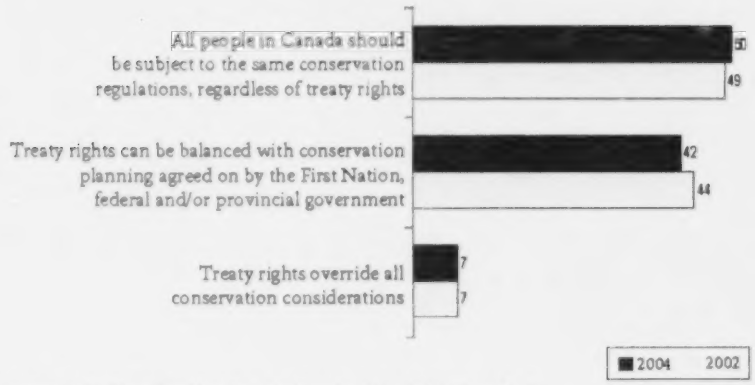
Views on definition of historical treaties


Historical treaties are agreements that need to be updated from time to time
47
48
Historical treaties are sacred promises that cannot be altered but can be interpreted in a modern context
37
36
Historical treaties are sacred promises that cannot be altered or reinterpreted in any way
14
15
2004
2002

Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2002 and 2004, Ipsos-Reid

- To better understand Canadian perceptions of treaty rights, Canadians were asked to give their interpretation of what they believed was meant by the term "historical treaty" by choosing from three statements.
- Overall, results for all three statements are relatively unchanged since 2002.
- Nearly one-half (47%) say that they believe historical treaties are agreements that need to be updated from time to time. Slightly more than one-third (37%) believe that historical treaties are sacred promises that cannot be altered but can be interpreted in a modern context.
- Fourteen percent currently hold the belief that historical treaties are sacred promises that cannot be altered or reinterpreted in any way.
- Regionally, residents of Quebec (51%) and Atlantic Canada (51%) are most likely to believe that historical treaties are agreements that need to be updated from time to time.

Views on treaty rights

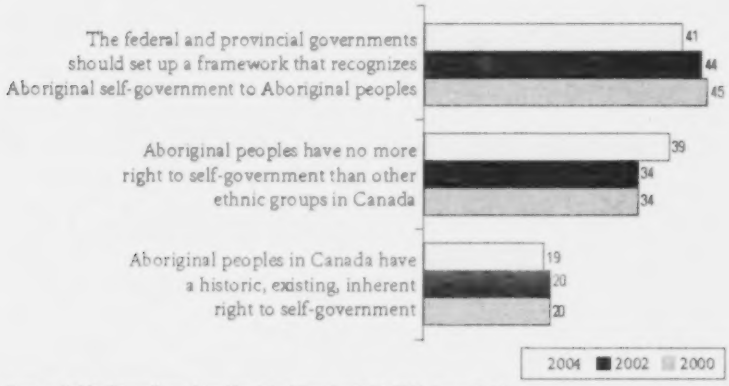

All people in Canada should be subject to the same conservation regulations, regardless of treaty rights
51
49
Treaty rights can be balanced with conservation planning agreed on by the First Nation, federal and/or provincial government
42
44
Treaty rights override all conservation considerations
7
7
2004
2002

Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2002 and 2004, Ipsos-Reid

- To add a further level of detail to how historical treaties are viewed by the general public, Canadians were presented with three statements regarding the utility of historical treaties.
- Again, the results are not appreciably different from those found in 2002.
- Currently, one-half (50%) of Canadians believe that all people in Canada should be subject to the same conservation regulations regardless of treaty rights.
- A smaller number (42%) hold the more moderate view that treaty rights can be balanced with conservation planning agreed on by the First Nation, federal and/or provincial government. Only seven percent feel that treaty rights override all conservation considerations.
- Looking at the results by region, those living in British Columbia (58%) are most likely to think that all people in Canada should be subject to the same conservation regulations regardless of treaty rights.

E – Aboriginal Self-Government

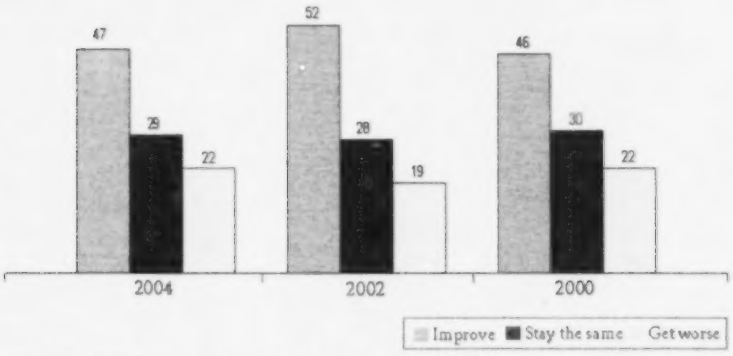
Overall views on Aboriginal self-government



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2000-2004, Ipsos-Reid

- In order to specifically determine how Canadians feel about Aboriginal self-government, three broad statements were presented to the public.
- Canadians express lukewarm support for Aboriginal self-government, although support for this concept has increased four percentage points since 2000. In this general question, more than two in five say that federal and provincial governments should set up a framework that recognizes Aboriginal right to self-government. Quebecers (51%) are most likely to support this concept.
- Among those who feel that Aboriginal peoples have no more right to self-government than other ethnic groups in Canada, residents of Saskatchewan (46%) are most likely to support this concept.
- One in five (20%) feel that Aboriginal peoples have a historic existing right to self-government, with Northerners (41%) most likely to support this viewpoint.

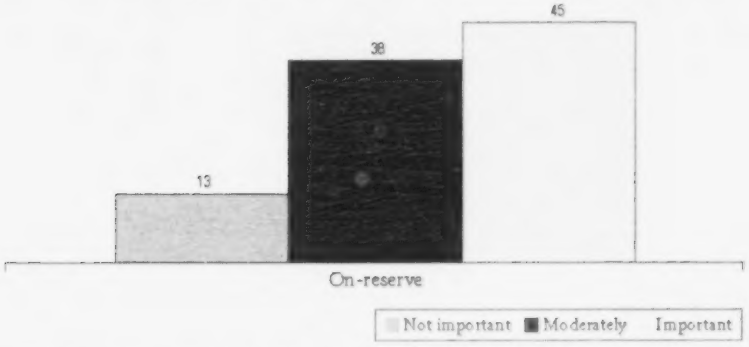
Impact of self-government on standard of living



Source: Public Views Regarding Aboriginal Peoples 2000-2004, Ipsos-Reid

- Canadians are slightly less confident in 2004 than in 2002 that Aboriginal self-government will mean an improvement in the overall standard of living of Aboriginal peoples. Still, a plurality of Canadians see self-government leading to an improvement rather than a decline or having things stay the same, when it comes to the standard of living of Aboriginal peoples.
- Quebecers (50%) and Northerners (50%) are most likely to say that self-government translates into an improved standard of living and living conditions for Aboriginal peoples. Albertans (34%) are most likely to see the standard of living and living conditions staying the same regardless of self-government, and residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (30%) are most likely to see self-government as worsening the standard of living and living conditions for Aboriginal peoples.

Importance of self-government in First Nations communities



Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Spring 2004, Ekos

- When asked about First Nations self-government, First Nations people living in First Nations communities (45%) attach a high level of importance to this issue. A slightly smaller number (38%) believe that self-government for Aboriginal people is moderately important, while only 13 percent do not see this as important at all.
- First Nations people living on-reserve in British Columbia (53%) are more likely to attach importance to this issue, while those living in Alberta (35%) are least likely.
- Interestingly, importance of Aboriginal self-government is highest among the younger First Nations people living on-reserve.

The Results

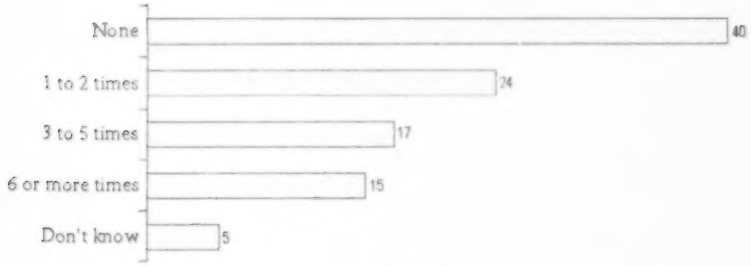
Section Seven – Communications

Section Seven – Communications

A – Contact with the Government

Recent Contact

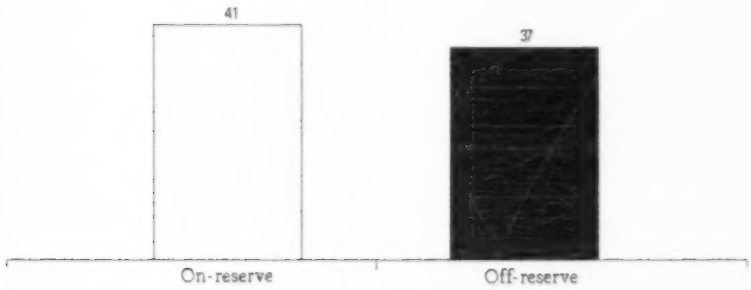
Number of times contacting the Government of Canada in past three months – North



Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- More than one-half of Northerners (56%) say that they have contacted the Government of Canada in the past three months. Contact with the government is up slightly from last year when exactly one-half (50%) said that they had made contact for service or information.

Number that have contacted the Government in past three months – on- and off-reserve

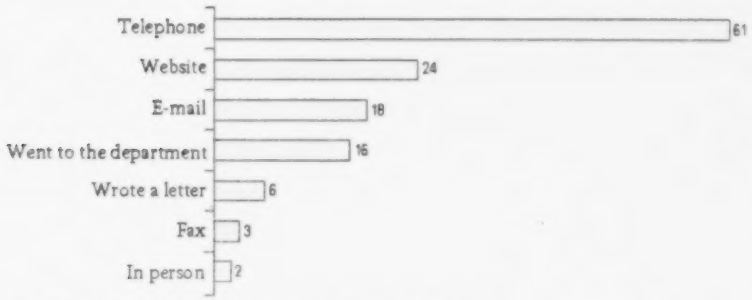


Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Mar. 2002, Ekos
Source: Survey of Aboriginal People Living Off-Reserve, 2003, Ekos

- Contact with the government among Aboriginal people living off-reserve is slightly lower than among Northerners. Nearly four in ten (37%) Aboriginal people living off-reserve say that they have contacted the government in the past three months. In comparison, slightly more Aboriginal people living on-reserve (41%) have contacted the government during the same time-frame.

Method of Contact

Method of contacting the Government of Canada – North



Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

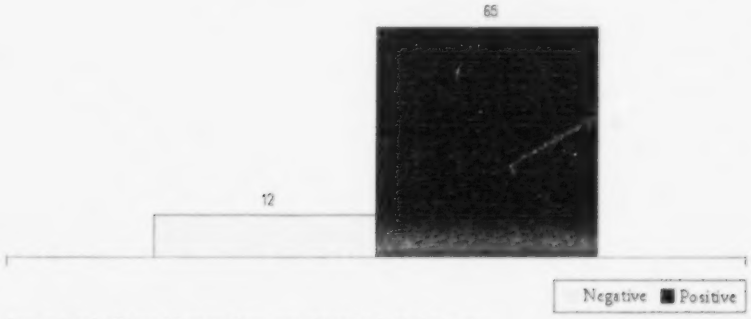
- Looking at the ways in which contact was initiated, we find that, among Northerners, the telephone (61%) is by far the most popular means of making contact. Electronic means of contact such as the Internet (24%) and e-mail (18%) are also popular means of initiating contact with the government. Contact through e-mail has increased six points since last year.
- While e-mail has increased in importance, in-person visits to the Department (16%) have decreased as a means of communication by seven points since last year.

Method of contact for most recent request

Source: Survey of Aboriginal People Living Off-Reserve, 2003, Ekos

- Among Aboriginal people living off-reserve who have contacted the government directly (as opposed to through an intermediary group or individual), the telephone is clearly the dominant method of communication. Four in ten (39%) have phoned directly, while one quarter (25%) telephoned the 1-800 number.
- Electronic contact is a less popular choice among Aboriginal people living off-reserve, with 13 percent using the Internet/e-mail.

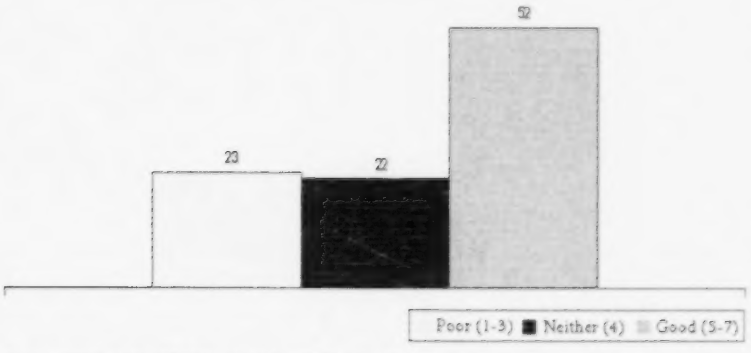
Overall quality rating for service or information received – North



Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- Northerners give the government a high rating when asked to rate the quality of service or information they received. Two-thirds (65%) currently rate the quality as good overall, compared to 68 percent last year. The number that believes the service or information they received was neither good nor bad (22%) has increased slightly since 2003.
- Aboriginal Northerners (59%) are much less likely than non-Aboriginal Northerners (71%) to give the government a positive rating.

Overall quality rating for service or information received – off-reserve

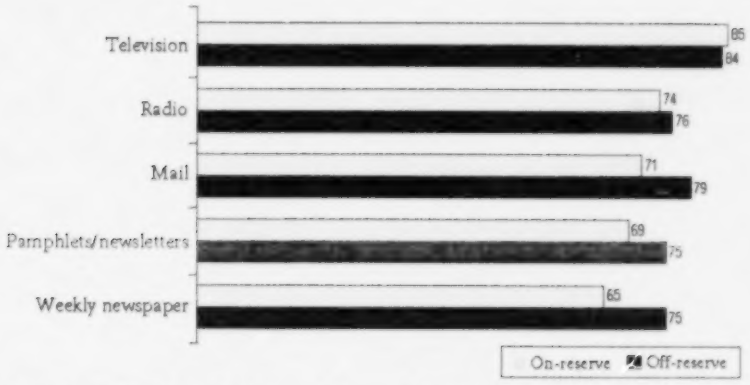


Source: Survey of Aboriginal People Living Off-Reserve, 2003, Ekos

- Aboriginal people living off-reserve are generally positive regarding the overall quality of service or information received in their most recent request, with one-half (52%) rating the quality of service as good.
- Nearly one-quarter (23%) rate the quality of service as poor.

Preferences for Being Contacted by Government

Preferred method of receiving information from Government

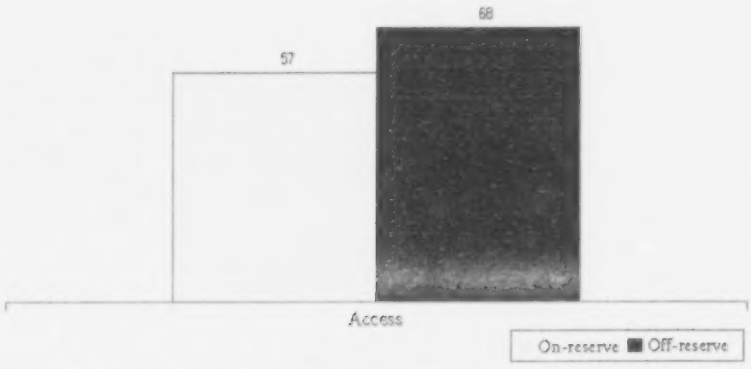


Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Dec. 2002, Ekos
Source: Survey of Aboriginal People Living Off-Reserve, 2003, Ekos

- A majority of Aboriginal people living off-reserve (84%) prefer the television as the primary method for the government to provide information. The number of off-reserve Aboriginal people who cite television as the best method of communication is consistent with the results found for First Nations people living on-reserve (85%).
- Those living off-reserve do not demonstrate a significant difference from residents on-reserve regarding the most useful means of government communication. Both on- and off-reserve Aboriginal people cite the same top five methods of communication, although the order is slightly different.

B – Using the Internet

Access to the Internet – on- and off-reserve

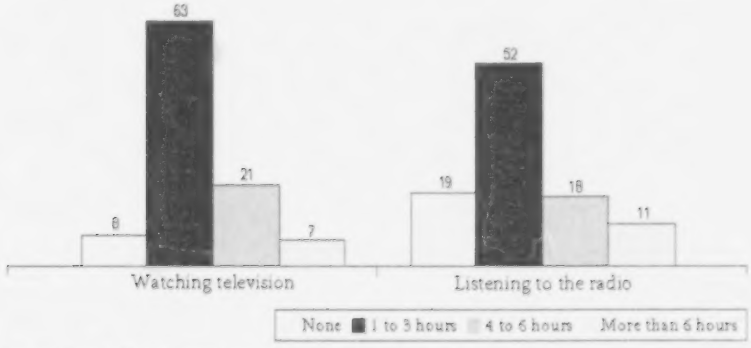


Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Spring 2004, Ekos
Source: Survey of Aboriginal People Living Off-Reserve, 2003, Ekos

- Internet access among First Nations people living on-reserve is quite high with over one-half (57%) reporting that they have Internet access.
- Access among Aboriginal people living off-reserve is much higher with a large majority (68%) saying that they have access.

C – Media Habits

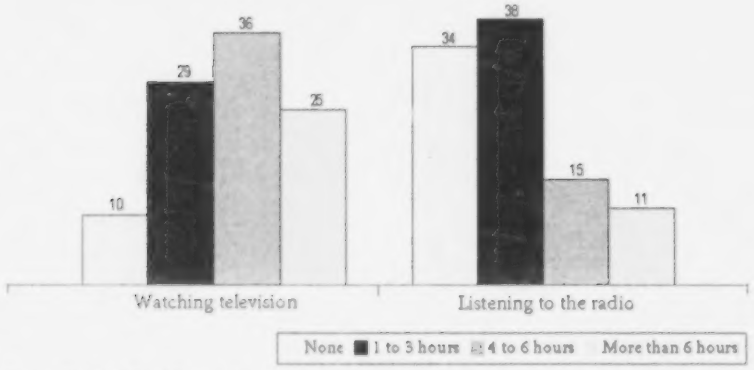
Hours spent watching television and listening to the radio (weekdays) – North



Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- Almost three in ten (28%) Northerners currently watch television an average of four or more hours per day during the week. This number has shown a slight, but constant, increase since 2002.
- Looking at radio listenership in the North, we can see that listenership of four or more hours per day during the week (29%) is comparable to that of television viewership.

Hours spent watching television and listening to the radio (weekends) – North

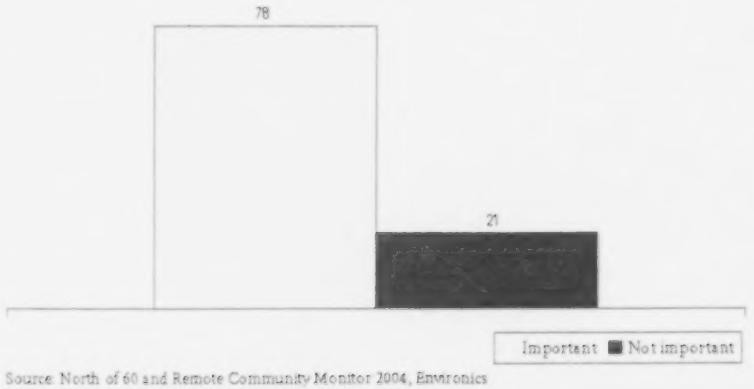


Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- On weekends, as might be expected, television viewership increases significantly. Six in ten (61%) Northerners say that they watch four hours of television or more, a number which has increased by three points since last year (58%).
- Radio listenership among Northerners declines dramatically on an average weekend. There is a decline among both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Northerners.

D – Aboriginal Language and Culture in the Media

Importance of Aboriginal languages and culture in the media



Source: North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor 2004, Environics

- Northerners were asked a follow-up question regarding whether or not they thought it was important for Aboriginal languages and cultures to be promoted on television, radio and the Internet.

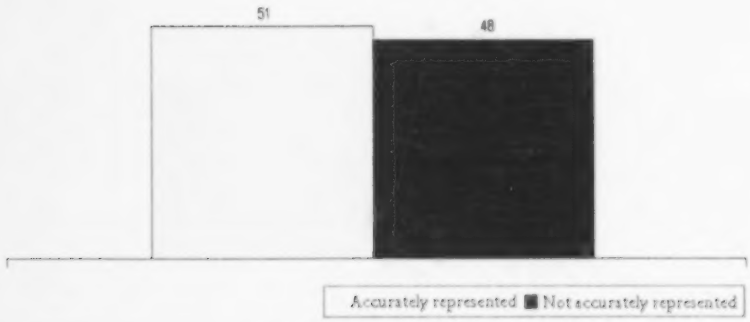
- Currently, eight in ten Northerners (78%) believe that it is important to represent Aboriginal culture in the various media. In fact, one-half of all Northerners (49%) believe that representing these cultures is very important.
- As might be expected, Aboriginal Northerners (89%) place a much higher level of importance than non-Aboriginal Northerners (64%) on representing Aboriginal languages and cultures in the media.

Importance of television station with a range of Aboriginal languages

Source: Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, Spring 2004, Ekos

- When asked to assess the importance of having a television station that gives full access to a range of Aboriginal languages, a large majority (88% total, 58% very important) of First Nations people living on-reserve believe that it is important.
- Only one in ten (11%) believe that having a television station that presents programming in Aboriginal languages is either not very (7%) or not at all (4%) important.

Accuracy with which Aboriginal people are represented in the media



Source: Reconnecting Government with Youth, April 2004, Ipsos-Reid

- To assess how current Aboriginal programming is viewed by youth, a number of young Canadians were asked how well they believed Aboriginal people were represented in movies and television (including the TV news).
- Youth are split on this issue with one-half (51%) believing Aboriginal people are accurately represented and the other half (48%) believing they are not accurately represented.